

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☐

Property Name: Edmondson District Historic District Inventory Number: B-5109
 Address: North of Edmondson Ave., west of Gwynn's Falls, south of Gwynns Falls Pk., east of Rognel Hts. Historic district: X yes ☐ no
 City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21229 County: Baltimore City
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore West
 Property Owner: various Tax Account ID Number: n/a
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): _____ Tax Map Number: _____
 Project: Red Line Corridor Transit Study Agency: Mass Transit Administration
 Agency Prepared By: John Milner Associates, Inc.
 Preparer's Name: Katherine Larson Farnham Date Prepared: 1/24/2006
 Documentation is presented in: Enoch Pratt Free Library--Md. Rm. vertical files; MHT DOE for Keely Daylight Row House Historic District (2004); Roderick Ryon, West Baltimore Neighborhoods (1993); Sandra Smith, Edmondson Village (U. Baltimore Archives, 1998)
 Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: X Eligibility recommended ☐ Eligibility not recommended
 Criteria: X A ☐ B X C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
 Name of the District/Property: _____
 Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ☐ yes Listed: ☐ yes
 Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes X no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The Edmondson District is a neighborhood of two- and two-and-one-half-story early-to-mid-twentieth-century row houses and duplexes. Streets in the neighborhood are on a grid system, though there are some curves and angles to accommodate topography and the angled streets of adjacent Rognel Heights. Wildwood Parkway, a north-south primary street, has a greenspace median, but other streets are regular one- or two-way streets with sidewalks. The majority of the houses are of the "daylighter" row house type which arrived in Baltimore shortly before World War II and proliferated afterward, though old-style houses are also present. There is also a garden apartment complex in the northwest part of the neighborhood. A variety of architectural styles are represented, including Italianate, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman, Spanish, Art Deco, and hybrids of these styles. Houses are typically two stories tall, two or three bays wide, and have either a full or partial front porch. Most are of brick construction, with a few stucco examples. Porches have a variety of treatments, including flat, hip, shed, and front-gabled pedimented roofs and brick, stone, or wooden columns and balustrades. The majority of houses retain much of their original detail, including windows and porches, though a minority have been altered with vinyl siding and replacement windows, wrought iron porch posts, or other changes. Perched on the hillsides of the street grid, the houses are attractively terraced and those on the

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended ☐
 Criteria: X A ☐ B X C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

MHT Comments: Note boundaries determined by MHT staff - map attached

Shirley Farnham ✓
 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

7/26/06
 Date

B. Kintz
 Reviewer, National Register Program

3/16/07
 Date

2006 01766

NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

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Edmondson District

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eastern side of the neighborhood overlook wooded areas in the surrounding Gwynns Falls Valley. There is also a triangular green where Gelston Street intersects with Woodington Rd., and this park is surrounded by larger rowhouses in the quaint, two-and-one-half-story "English" style.

The Edmondale Apartments, concentrated around Wildwood Parkway and Stokes Ave., are relatively austere three-story brick garden apartments. Some are built in minimalist Colonial Revival style, with pedimented porticos and entrance doors, while others have Art Deco horizontal striations. The apartments have been renovated and have lost some integrity, but represent the final stage of the neighborhood's development.

The neighborhood also includes several churches, most of which stand on Edmondson Avenue, and one elementary school, Lyndhurst Elementary. Most of these institutions are similar in age to the housing stock and relatively well-preserved. There was limited commercial development on Edmondson Ave. as well, but businesses were typically in converted homes and the arrival of the nearby Edmondson Village Shopping Center in 1947 eliminated much of the need for neighborhood businesses elsewhere. One remnant of the early commercial district is a former movie theater at Edmondson and Edgewood, now the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church.

This neighborhood, lying just inside the city line, was rural estates until around 1900. Much of the neighborhood lies on property that was formerly known as Lyndhurst, an estate owned by Reverdy Johnson. Electric streetcar lines began serving this area in the 1890s, and the estates on either side of Edmondson Ave. began to develop into neighborhoods after that point. Rognel Heights (begun 1894) was the first planned subdivision to develop in the area between Gwynns Falls and the present city line, and lies immediately west of the Edmondson District. Rognel Heights and some of the earlier subdivisions further out developed, at least initially, with detached homes. Edmondson is nearly all row houses, with a few duplexes and a later phase of garden apartments. Improvements to the Gwynns Falls bridge and extension of municipal services west to that point spurred the first development of Edmondson. Between 1911 and 1914, developers began to build the neighborhood's first homes along Edmondson Avenue, including 14-foot-wide dogleg-plan row houses and duplexes. These houses were intended to seem more suburban than standard row houses, with small front yards and full front porches, but had not yet expanded to the width seen after World War I.

James Keelty, a prominent developer, put a huge mark on Edmondson and adjoining neighborhoods by building hundreds of suburban-style row houses there, beginning in 1922. These shallower, 20-foot-wide houses followed the newly introduced "daylighter" floor plan, which emphasized interior light and air and had windows in every room. These houses, which migrated to Baltimore and Washington from Philadelphia, were a significant improvement over the traditional narrow city row house with blind interior rooms. Keelty's daylighter houses boasted such suburban amenities as front and rear yards and porches, full basements, and detached rear-alley garages, and were marketed to middle-class urban workers who wanted an affordable home in these new streetcar suburbs. By the late 1920s, Keelty was building "English style" daylighters and adding an additional half-story to create more upper floor living space, but the neighborhood standard remained the traditional two-story daylighter with a small front attic. Various architectural styles, including Colonial Revival and Craftsman, were seen in the designs of the houses. The Keelty houses featured a number of high-end details, such as slate roofing, tiled porches, fireplaces, and architectural variations within rows to avoid the cookie-cutter look. Other developers built in the neighborhood as well, but were not as well-known or dominant as Keelty, who also built many homes in the Allendale neighborhood south of Edmondson Ave. He kept a real estate office on Edmondson Ave. and was the primary benefactor of St. Bernardine's Catholic Church, built on Edmondson Ave. at Mt. Holly in 1929 and named in honor of his daughter who died in childhood.

Construction of the neighborhood continued until and after World War II, and Keelty's sons continued to pursue development after his death. By the 1940s, the daylighters had been scaled down stylistically to a simple brick dwelling with minimal detail and

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Eligibility recommended _____

Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: ___A___B___C___D Considerations: ___A___B___C___D___E___F___G

MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services_____
Date_____
Reviewer, National Register Program_____
Date

acking the front porch, though the internal floor plan remained similar. The appeal of the neighborhood increased in 1947, when the Edmondson Village Shopping Center opened nearby, creating a retail district within walking distance. In 1950, the Edmondale Building Company constructed a garden apartment complex, the Edmondale Apartments, in the northwest section of the neighborhood.

The neighborhood initially was populated by middle-class white residents, who commuted to work downtown by streetcar until 1954, when streetcar service was ended and replaced by city buses and private automobiles. During the 1955-1960 period, the demographics of the neighborhood changed dramatically, as whites left Edmondson for more suburban locales and blacks moved into the neighborhood. This phenomenon was triggered partly by federal programs encouraging suburban housing, and partly by white-flight "blockbusting," in which real estate operatives deliberately settled a few black families in desirable all-white neighborhoods to force out whites. They would then buy low from the whites looking to get out, and sell high to blacks looking to move in. Segregation on the general housing market, and the paucity of options available to blacks at the time, further enhanced such tactics. The speculators often rented properties to anyone who could pay the rent, and failed to maintain their holdings or control unruly tenants, creating problems for adjacent homeowners and leading to increased crime. By the late 1960s, Edmondson was predominantly black and has remained a middle-class black neighborhood since that time. Speculation declined after passage of the Fair Housing Act in 1968. Edmondson today is a charming neighborhood of mostly well-tended and nicely preserved homes.

The Edmondson District, including the portion determined eligible as the Keelty Rowhouse District, is an attractive and cohesive early streetcar suburb which illustrates the desire of early-twentieth-century homebuilders to combine city and suburban amenities. The quality construction of homes in the neighborhood is evident, and the post-1900 evolution of row house architecture in Baltimore is illustrated in the variety of home styles found here. The Edmondson District is recommended eligible for the NRHP.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____

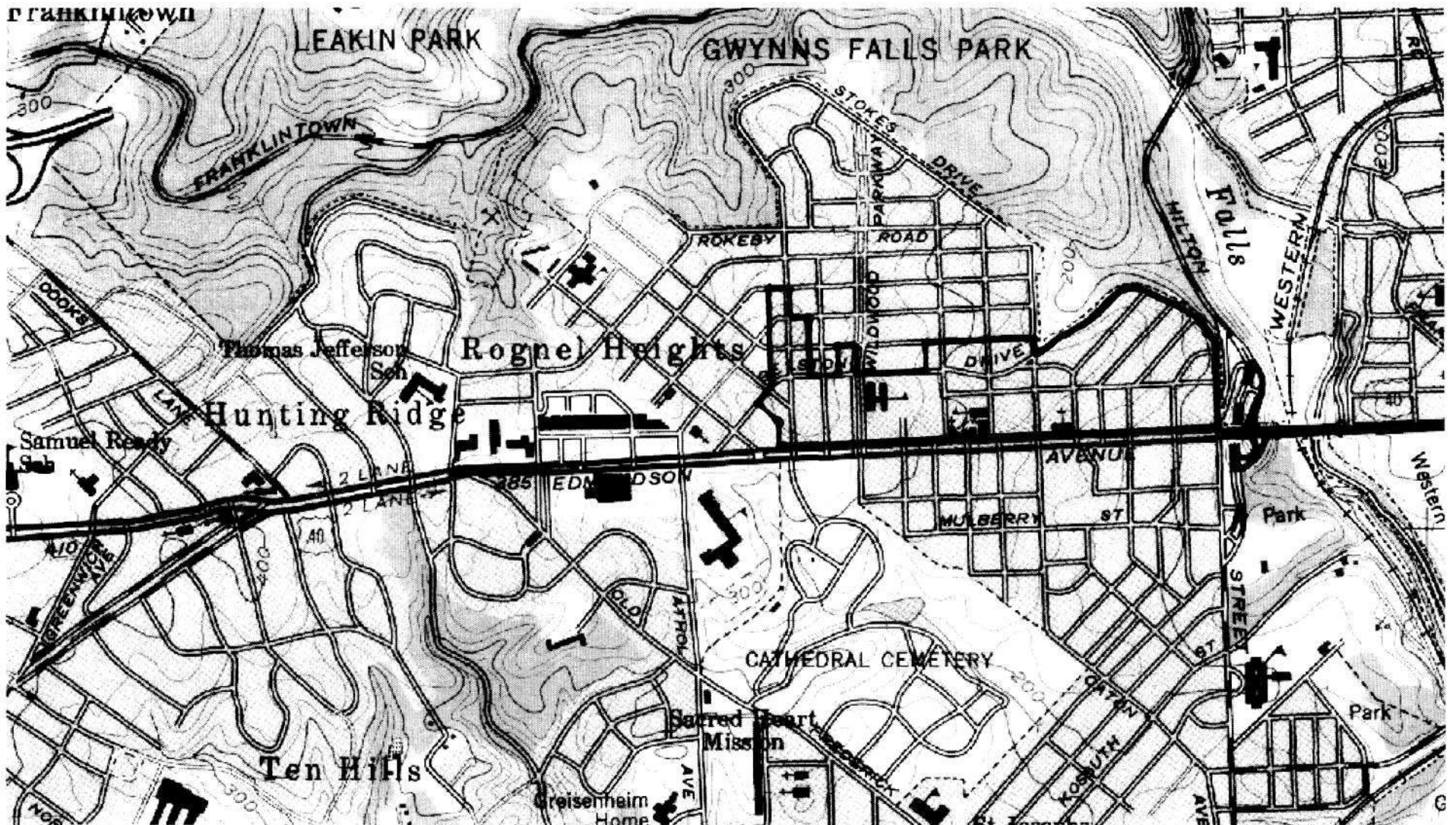
Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

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Date_____
Reviewer, National Register Program_____
Date

Edmondson Historic District
Baltimore City, Maryland
MIHP No. B-5109



Baltimore West USGS Quadrangle

MHT recommended boundary of
NR-eligible district



B-5109

700 blk. Hilton St., Edmontson District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/15/2005

MD SHPO

view to SW

#1 of 16 317



B-5109

Edgewood St. @ Belston Dr. Edmondson District

Baltimore City, MD

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MD SUPD

View to W

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Grantley C Gelston Dr, Edmondson District

Baltimore City, MD

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View to W

#3 of 16



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N. Loudoun Ave., Edmontson District

Baltimore City, MD

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View to NW of duplexes

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B-Slog

700 blk. Lyndhurst St., Edmonston District
Baltimore City, MD

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MD SHPD

view to NE

#5 of 10



B-5109

3700 blk. Cranston Ave, Edmondson District

Baltimore City, MD

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view to NW

#6 of 16 803



B-5109

Corner of Harlem + Allentown Sts, Edmonston District

Baltimore City, MD

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view to NE on Allentown St.

#7 of 16 004

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4100 Blk. Edmondson Ave, Edmondson District
Baltimore City, MD

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view to NW

#8 of 15023



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Triangle park at Woodington + Gelston, Edmonston District
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view to S.

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900 blk. N. Woodington, Edmonston District
Baltimore City, MD

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View showing later daylighters + English style houses

#10 of 16 





B-5109

Corner of Raleby Rd + Wildwood Pkwy, Edmondson District

Baltimore City, MD

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View to NE

#1 of 16

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Corner of Roseby Rd + Wildwood Pkwy., Edmontan District
Baltimore City, MD

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MD STPD

view to SW

#12 of 16

002

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B-5109

Olivet Baptist Church, Edmontson District

Baltimore City, MD

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view to NW at Edmontson + Edgewood

#13 of 16

200

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St. Bernadine's Church, Edmondson Ave, Edmondson District
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MD SHPO

View to NW at Mt. Holly St.

#14 of 16

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G-5109

Wildwood Gardens Apts, 1300 6th, Wildwood Pkwy, Edmondson District
Baltimore City, MD

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MD SHPO

view to NW

#15 of 16 216



B-5109

Wildwood Gardens Apts, 1300 blk. Wildwood Pkwy, Edmondson District
Baltimore City, MD

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6/14/2005

MD SHPD

view to NE

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